

Good afternoon. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on proposed maritime security measures.

My name is C. J. Hickmon. I represent President Casinos which operates a gaming facility in downtown St. Louis. Our casino property includes a permanently moored vessel, the Admiral, which is not an inspected vessel, but which presumably will fall under the Coast Guard's proposed facility regulations.

While we recognize the need to consider homeland security issues in our operations, we want to emphasize that we are not in the transportation business. It is only our location that ties us to the proposed maritime security regulations.

We support the Coast Guard's efforts to organize port security committees, to develop port security plans, and to require vessel and facility operators to assess their operations. Unfortunately, your proposed facility security rules were apparently developed with only transportation and industrial activities in mind. Permanently moored vessels such as gaming vessels comprise a unique sector of the inland maritime industry and we feel that it is inappropriate to lump our activities in with power plants and oil terminals.

Proposed security measures such as fences, barriers, positive identification of persons entering the facility, and inspection of personal effects may be appropriate for a power plant or river terminal; but they will *not* improve our security in any meaningful way. We already have extensive security systems including surveillance systems, trained guest safety personnel, and armed state gaming agents who are present at all times when we are in operation. This is not to say that we are invulnerable to an attack. We are ready and willing to assess our security from a maritime perspective and take reasonable steps to address any shortfalls. We do not want to see the Coast Guard apply a broad brush to all facilities, however.

Given the unique nature of permanently moored vessels, and the extensive security systems already present at gaming facilities, we believe that our operations deserve separate consideration under the proposed regulations. At a minimum, the local Captain of the Port should be granted wide discretion in determining the appropriateness of any proposed maritime security measures with regard to our facility. We will take reasonable steps to improve our security, but these steps ought to be based on a consideration of local conditions and the systems we already have in place.

The cost estimates cited in the Coast Guard's notice only consider direct costs. We are in the entertainment business and our business will suffer if our guests feel threatened or are inconvenienced by security measures. Under normal operations, maritime security measures should not be invasive or apparent to our customers. At higher security levels, people will accept increased security – up to a point. We believe that under your proposed rules, at MARSEC Level 3 we must close our doors to the public. This would be appropriate with a specific, credible threat. We are not sure how the Coast Guard will develop and disseminate the intelligence needed to determine that level of threat. Given the severe economic impact, we trust that the Coast Guard will only go to MARSEC Level 3 when it is truly appropriate.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. We will also submit written comments to the docket.

**President Casino – Laclede’s Landing
Coast Guard Requirements for Maritime Security Measures****

Things you’ll probably end up doing:

- ▶ Appoint a collateral duty Company Security Officer for homeland/maritime security (CG POC).
- ▶ Conduct a maritime security assessment for the facility.
- ▶ Develop facility security plan according to CG standards.
- ▶ Train marine crew and guest safety staff.
- ▶ Awareness training for general employees.
- ▶ Conduct quarterly security drills.
- ▶ Designate “Restricted Areas” and provide signs. (Existing may be OK.)
- ▶ Install entryway signs prohibiting the introduction of weapons/explosives.
- ▶ Install entryway magnetometers.
- ▶ Provide hand-held wands.
- ▶ Train guest safety staff members in use of wands.
- ▶ Develop protocols when/if weapons/explosives discovered.
- ▶ Install glare lighting on outboard side.
- ▶ Arrange for availability of Jersey barriers.
- ▶ Emergency communication system. (Alarm to CG).

Things you need to object to (strenuously):

- ▶ Customer ID checks.
- ▶ Customer personal effects inspections (airport-style).
- ▶ Armed security patrols.
- ▶ Armed small boat patrols.
- ▶ Additional permanent security fencing/barriers.

Issues to resolve:

- ▶ Potential conflicts with MO Gaming regulations?
- ▶ MO Gaming officers as resource?
- ▶ MO Gaming concurrence with the plan?
- ▶ State/local law enforcement role?
- ▶ CG response resources?
- ▶ Private security resources?

**** Work in progress. Won’t know exact requirements until interim final rule published (June ‘03).
Even then, there may be some negotiation possible with local CG COTP. ****